(c) Selection of airports would depend on traffic density, regional distribution and other commercial aspects.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Conference on Civil Aviation Safety and Security

1597. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called for a global partnership to make air travel fully secure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a Conference on Civil Aviation Safety and Security was held in New Delhi recently; and

(d) if so, the details of discussions held in the Conference and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Directorate General of Civil Aviation organised a two day seminar on the subject "In-Flight Security" under the 'EU-India Civil Aviation Project', which was conducted by an European Union (EU) expert on 14th — 15th July, 2005.

(d) Issues regarding airport and airline security and the practices followed by international agencies at various international airports were discussed in the seminar. The seminar resulted in an enhanced awareness of security and safety requirements and procedures as per the International Civil Aviation Organization and EU standards.

Occupancy rate of national carriers

1598. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the occupancy rate of national air carriers is lower than that of the private airlines;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) how private airlines are able to provide discounted rates of fares lower than that provided by national carriers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The domestic seat factor of Indian Airlines is comparatively lower than that of the private airlines. Indian Airlines links 158 city pairs to promote connectivity in the country. Many of such city pairs have low traffic density which affects the overall average on the total network of Indian Airlines.

(c) Domestic airlines are free to charge fares keeping in view their operating cost, commercial judgement and competitive market environment.

Reduction in fares in Gulf Sector

1599. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a record reduction in the fares to and fro Gulf countries by Air India, Indian Airlines and other carriers;

(b) if so, how this has been made possible despite the rising cost of fuel; and

(c) what has been its impact on passenger traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The airlines engaged in international air services to/from India are not required to file the fares with the Government and Government does not maintain details about air fares charged by airlines. According to Indian Airlines, there is no reduction in the IATA or Published fares applicable to/from Gulf countries. The actual fares quoted in the market are, however, much lower as these fares are based on demand/ supply, seasonality and product features like frequency, timings, direct/ indirect operations etc. There are frequent upward and downward movements of fares in response to market needs by various carriers operating on these sectors.